

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. – 45. (Cancelled).

46. (New) An article management system, comprising:

a noncontact electronic tag, storing tag data and attached to an article managed in a management area;

a first interrogator, configured to assign, to the noncontact electronic tag, information indicative of whether or not the article is permitted to pass through a passage section leading from the management area as a part of the tag data;

a second interrogator, communicatively connected to the first interrogator, and configured to communicate with the noncontact electronic tag attached to the article passing through the passage section;

a tag check processor, configured to detect whether the information indicates that the noncontact electronic tag is permitted to pass through the passage section;

a multiple tag access processor, configured to receive at least a part of the tag data of the noncontact electronic tag while avoiding communicative collision with respect to another noncontact electronic tag attached to an article passing through the passage section at the same time, when the tag check processor detects that the information indicates that the noncontact electronic tag is not permitted to pass through the passage section.

47. (New) The article management system of claim 46, further comprising:

a radio communication medium, adapted to be assigned to a user who passes through the passage section and storing user information indicative of the user,

wherein the second interrogator is configured to communicate with the radio communication medium to receive the user information.

48. (New) The article management system of claim 46, wherein the tag data includes an application family identifier (AFI) and a unique ID (UID), and the detection by the tag check processor is executed on the basis of at least one of the AFI and the UID.